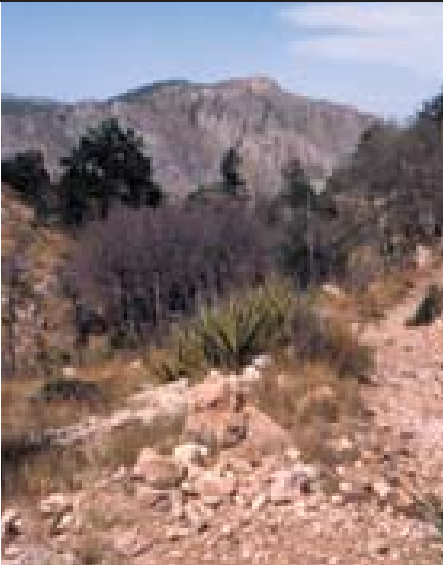




GUADALUPE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK





Message from the Superintendent

DEAR PARK FRIENDS, NEIGHBORS, AND VISITORS:

Dear Park Friends, Neighbors, and Visitors;

It has been some time since we communicated with all of you about the general management plan (GMP) for Guadalupe Mountains National Park. Our schedule has been adjusted to address legal and policy requirements for evaluating potential wilderness within the park. As part of the planning process, we have completed a wilderness suitability assessment and are requesting the authority to complete a formal wilderness study. This study, in conjunction with the general management plan, would help redefine the areas of the park that would be managed as wilderness in the future. Our commitment to an open planning process with the involvement of all interest groups remains the same. Based on your previous comments and concerns about the conceptual alternatives presented in Newsletter #2, we have consolidated and significantly changed elements of our previous alternative statements. As a result, we felt we needed to return to you to share our revisions and to again seek your comments.

This newsletter presents three alternatives that reflect different paths to the same overriding objective of preserving the natural and cultural resources and values of Guadalupe Mountains National Park while providing a range of opportunities for visitors. The first alternative (alternative A) is still our "no-action" alternative. The other two alternatives reflect different approaches to managing the park. Alternative B proposes a concentration and enhancement of some current facilities, removal of other facilities, and concentrating most visitors at developed areas. Alternative C proposes more opportunities for visitors dispersed over more areas of the park and includes some additional development, particularly adjacent to the Salt Basin Dunes (west side of the park). The amount of additional land proposed for management as wilderness also differs in each of the alternatives. The alternatives are described in terms of future "conditions" or characteristics of the park under that alternative - i.e., this is how the park would be managed if this alternative was chosen as the approved plan for managing the park. We have tried to be clear and straightforward in our descriptions and have included a sampling of actions that the park could take under each alternative to achieve these desired future conditions. A complete listing all of the potential actions and future conditions under each alternative is available at our web site address.

With this newsletter, we are inviting you to comment on any of the future conditions or specific actions listed in any of the three alternatives. We are most interested in your response to specific conditions or actions rather than any overall reaction to any of the alternatives. We do not intend for your responses to gauge or support the popularity of any of the different alternatives. We are interested, instead, in your reactions to a wide range of possibilities. Once we have received your feedback we will proceed to identify a preferred alternative that could be one of the alternatives, or possibly some combination of the best elements from each of the alternatives. Some of the proposals in this newsletter may be seen as controversial, and others as common sense. Please feel free to give us your reactions to any of the proposals you see in this newsletter.

As in past newsletters you will find a pre-stamped comment form that can be quickly and easily mailed back to us. If you prefer responding via your computer, the e-mail address remains gumo_superintendent@nps.gov. And finally, thank you for your continuing interest and support of Guadalupe Mountains National Park. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Ellis Richard
Superintendent, Guadalupe Mountains National Park

PARK AREAS THAT ARE SUITABLE FOR WILDERNESS

When the park was first established in 1972, a wilderness study was completed that recommended portions of the park be protected as designated wilderness. Congress acted on this recommendation in 1978 by formally designating 46,850 acres as wilderness. In 1988 the park boundary was expanded to the west to include 10,123 acres of the Salt Basin Dunes area. As required by the Wilderness Act, these new lands also needed to be assessed for their suitability for wilderness. The GMP team has performed a preliminary assessment of wilderness suitability for these new lands by evaluating characteristics such as presence of roads, extent of open land, existing disturbance, potential for solitude, and opportunities for a primitive recreational experience. The wilderness suitability assessment found all the new lands to be potentially suitable as wilderness. In addition to these new lands, some original park lands previously excluded from the 1978 wilderness designation were also found suitable as potential wilderness. As specified by NPS regulations, the wilderness suitability assessment is being forwarded to the Director of the National Park Service in Washington for approval. The results of the wilderness suitability assessment does not mean that areas will necessarily be recommended or designated as wilderness, only that they should be formally studied as potential wilderness. A wilderness recommendation must come from a formal NPS wilderness study and is subject to presidential and congressional approval.

In a letter accompanying the wilderness suitability assessment submittal, Superintendent Richard and the Intermountain Regional Director Karen Wade have requested the authority to perform a formal wilderness study in conjunction with the general management plan. This request was justified by the greater efficiency and cost-effectiveness of performing both efforts concurrently. The GMP process will proceed in parallel with the wilderness study process by identifying park lands under the various planning alternatives that could be managed as wilderness (designated as backcountry and wilderness zone) and those that could be used for other park purposes such as visitor facilities and access. Park areas outside the previously designated wilderness, such as the Patterson Hills, Guadalupe Peak Trail, and Bear Canyon, are reconsidered for possible wilderness management (backcountry and wilderness zone) in the future.

As shown on the following pages, the new GMP alternatives propose varying amounts of the backcountry and wilderness zone in both new and older portions of the

park. In most cases, managing these areas consistent with the backcountry and wilderness zone prescriptions represents little or no change from their existing management. The only difference would be that future development would be precluded in these areas of the park. If a wilderness study is not authorized to coincide with the general management plan, the plan will still develop management zoning recommendations that will guide the future management of the park. However, in this instance, no proposed GMP development within the lands assessed as suitable for wilderness could be implemented until the wilderness study is authorized, completed, and approved.

MANAGEMENT ZONES PRESCRIBE A VARIETY OF FUTURE PARK SETTINGS

As the planning alternatives are developed, management prescriptions (commonly referred to as management “zones”) would be applied to all areas of the park. These management zones would define the future resource conditions and visitor experience opportunities that the plan would recommend for specific areas of the park. The zones would also identify where future management actions would either maintain existing conditions or create new recommended conditions or experiences. The following five management zones were developed based on planning team workshops and public meetings. Each of the new GMP alternatives has a unique configuration of the management zones. When a preferred GMP alternative is adopted, these management zones will provide the fundamental guidance for future park management decisions and actions throughout the park.

Backcountry and Wilderness Zone

(Designated Wilderness and Suitable for Wilderness): Lands in this prescription would be nearly undisturbed natural settings where significant cultural resources would be stabilized and natural processes would predominate. Access could be challenging, and visitors could experience a sense of high adventure and risk, solitude, and wildness. Encounters with other people would be very low. Dispersed visitor activities would predominate, including hiking, horseback riding, primitive camping, exploring, spelunking, and climbing. Potential development appropriate for this zone could include narrow unsurfaced trails, minimal directional trail signs, trail drainage and erosion control measures, tent pads, and primitive restrooms.

Wilderness Threshold Zone: This zone would include minimally disturbed natural settings managed for a low level of human intervention and development. Significant cultural resources would be stabilized and potentially restored. Access to and throughout these areas could be moderately challenging, and visitors could experience a moderate sense of risk, adventure, and remoteness with a low number of encounters with other people. Moderately dispersed visitor activities could include hiking, horseback riding, resource education/discovery, and primitive

picnicking and camping. Potential developments appropriate for this zone could include minimally improved wider and more accessible trails, directional and interpretive signs, rustic benches and shade improvements, and restrooms.

Frontcountry Zone: Lands under this zone would be natural in appearance with a moderate level of human intervention and development. Natural systems could be modified, and significant cultural resources would be stabilized and potentially restored and rehabilitated for operational or visitor use. These areas could be accessed with a low to moderate challenge and present a low level of adventure and risk. Appropriate visitor activities could include hiking, horseback riding, picnicking, walk-in camping, nature study, and scenic viewing, with somewhat frequent encounters with other visitors. Potential developments appropriate for this zone would include improved and surfaced trails, gravel parking lots, picnic and staging areas, walk-in campground sites, and modern restrooms.

Developed Zone: This zone would include areas with natural features, but the landscape would be highly modified and managed for visitor use. Significant cultural resources would be restored and rehabilitated for operational or visitor use. Areas would be easily and conveniently accessed by foot, bicycle, or motor vehicle from improved roads or trails. Visitor activities could include nature study, developed picnicking and camping, and scenic viewing. Frequent encounters with a large number of visitors and staff would be expected. Potential developments could include visitor centers, paved trails and parking lots, picnic area clusters, car and RV developed campgrounds, and modern restrooms. A subgroup of this zone would include limited areas for park administration and operations. These areas would accommodate maintenance and administrative facilities, as well as staff housing, and would be screened and separated from visitor use areas.

Motorized Scenic Corridor Zone: This zone would apply to moderate to highly modified and managed vehicular corridors passing through natural settings. Significant cultural resources would be stabilized and could be restored to enhance the scenic view. The corridor would be accessible for automobiles (some limited to 4WD), bicycles, or hikers. Visitors would experience landscapes with diverse, scenic features and frequent encounters with other people and vehicles. Potential development could include graded and surfaced (gravel or paved) roads and pullouts, parking lots, and modern restrooms.

SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES

DESIRED FUTURE CONDITIONS COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES

By the mandate of laws, regulations and policies governing the National Park Service, natural and cultural resources must be protected in all parks in perpetuity. Guadalupe Mountains National Park must protect resources as a fundamental and consistent element in all GMP alternatives. The objectives and future conditions guiding the management of natural and cultural resources presented below would apply uniformly to all alternatives in the GMP. For brevity in this newsletter, the items marked by bullets represent a **limited selection** of more detailed examples of how the desired future conditions might be achieved.



Natural Resource Desired Future Conditions

There would be a healthy, dynamic, naturally functioning ecosystem, characteristic of the Guadalupe Mountains environment. To the extent possible, this ecosystem would have its diversity fully restored, including animals, plants, and biological interrelationships currently missing.

- To the extent possible, reintroduce the natural role of fire and fire regimes in the park's ecosystem

To the extent possible, exotic plant and animal species would be absent.

- Aoudad sheep would be eradicated to allow for the reintroduction of native species such as the big horn sheep.

All paleontologic resources would continue to remain in situ and in collections, as appropriate, and both organic and mineralized remains would be in excellent condition.

- Paleontologic resources would continue to be fully documented and preserved.

All geologic features would continue to be in situ to the extent possible, and in excellent condition.

- Geological resources would continue to be fully documented and preserved through expanded cooperative partnerships.

Air quality monitoring would document improvements in visibility and environmental health.

- Air quality would be improved by the park continuing to work proactively within the local region and through public education resulting in greater awareness and positive action to improve visibility.

Cultural Resource Desired Future Conditions

Archeological sites in the park would continue to remain undisturbed in situ and would be evaluated for eligibility and listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

- Archeological sites would continue to be protected by active monitoring and public education.

Ethnographic resources and landscapes of the park would be evaluated for eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as traditional cultural properties and managed in consultation with the people or group involved.

- Active consultations with affiliated groups would continue, including government-to-government consultations with traditionally affiliated tribes.

All historic structures and historic cultural landscapes in the park that are eligible would be listed on the national register.

- Evaluation of structures and landscapes for national register eligibility would continue.

Museum artifacts, specimens, and archives of the park would be stored safely, consistent with environmental and security standards; adequate space to conduct ongoing inventory, evaluation, treatment, and research would be provided.

- All objects and manuscripts would be identified, inventoried, stored, and cataloged, as appropriate, for convenient retrieval for research.

SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES...AN EXPLORATION OF DIFFERENT FUTURE VISIONS

The following planning alternatives are intended to define three different future management visions for the park that would be implemented over the next 15 to 20 years. Descriptions of some possible future conditions in the park have been arranged under major topic headings to give you a broad summary of how the park would be managed differently under each alternative. The items marked by bullets under each of the alternatives that follow, present a **limited selection** of more detailed examples of how the desired future conditions might be achieved. A companion to the narrative descriptions in alternatives B and C are park maps showing how management zones would be applied to all park lands to provide specific guidelines or "prescriptions" in each area of the park that would contribute to implementing the specific alternative.



ALTERNATIVE A - NO ACTION

Concept

This alternative reflects the conditions, visitor services, and management practices as they currently exist. This alternative describes a continuation of existing park management practices that call for all park lands that are undeveloped for visitor or operational uses to be managed as wilderness. Current visitor facilities and park infrastructure would stay in the existing locations. The park would continue to provide areas that visitors could easily access and experience by vehicle, and much larger areas of the park that they could access and experience only with considerable effort and challenge.



Natural Resource Desired Future Conditions

Plant and animal species and communities would be protected from impacts of exotic species by selected preventive measures.

- Horse use would continue to be allowed on designated trails.

Most wetland and aquatic environments would be protected as natural ecosystems.

- Undeveloped springs and wetlands would be protected for their value to wildlife.

Cultural Resource Desired Future Conditions

Historic structures and landscapes that are eligible for or listed on the national register would continue to be stabilized.

- Williams Ranch house would continue to be stabilized.

Visitor Understanding and Experience Desired Future Conditions

In this alternative, visitor understanding would be based on the opportunities to develop an appreciation of the park's primary themes. An introduction and basic understanding of the park's geological and natural history would remain available at the current level in the park's main visitor center. An introduction to the major cultural and historical themes would remain at the Frijole Ranch house. An understanding of wilderness values would be available to all visitors seeking a backcountry experience either through day hikes into the park's backcountry or through a backcountry permit allowing overnight use. Campers at most levels, including recreational vehicle users, would have an opportunity to understand the value and importance of clear night skies and explore the themes and resources visible in a night sky relatively free of light and air pollution. More in-depth understanding of these themes would remain available through a wide selection of books and educational materials available at the main visitor center and sold through the park's cooperating association.

Education, interpretation, and orientation opportunities would continue to be focused primarily around existing centralized visitor facilities.

- Most visitor interpretive activities would continue to be at the Pine Springs visitor center.

Park roads would continue to provide vehicular and visitor access from highways and roads for day use and limited overnight use.

- No new roads would be built; the Williams Ranch road would remain a high-clearance 4WD road that is available by permit only.

Trailheads and hiking trails would provide the primary means to see the interior and upland areas of the park.

- No new trails or trailheads would be built, and both would be maintained as they currently are.

Pine Springs would continue to be the primary visitor destination point for most day use and overnight camping visitors.

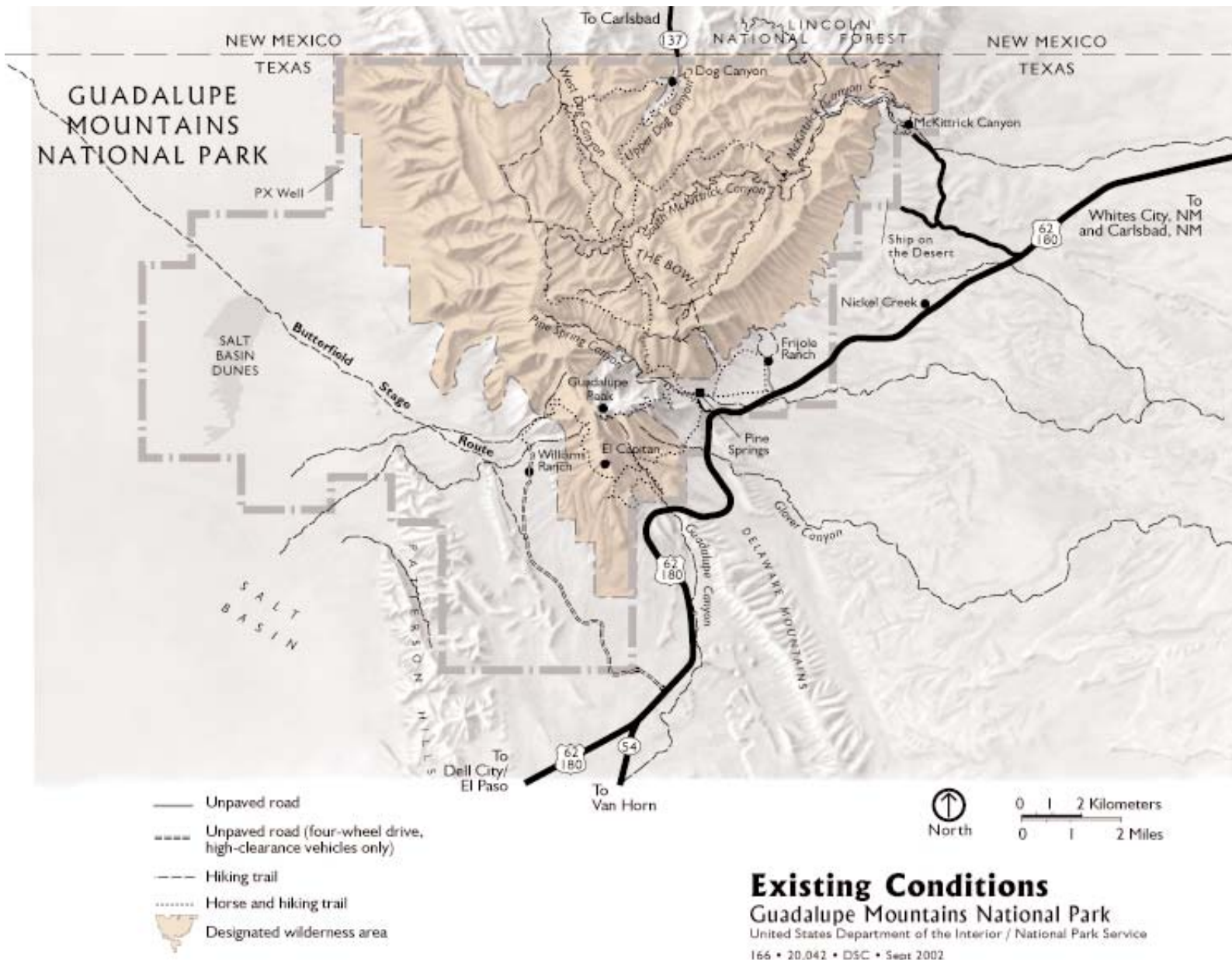
- The picnic area and RV parking would remain at the Pine Springs trailhead.

Frijole Ranch and McKittrick Canyon would continue to be visitor destinations for day use opportunities.

- Facilities, interpretation, and low elevation hiking opportunities would continue to be provided.

Dog Canyon would continue as a more remote visitor destination for day use and overnight camping.

- Camping facilities and hiking opportunities would continue to be provided as currently available.



The west side of the park, including Williams Ranch and the Salt Basin Dunes, would continue to be maintained as remote and limited access visitor destinations for day use.

- Access to the Salt Basin Dunes and Williams Ranch would be from the boundary or by permit on existing primitive access roads to small interior parking areas.

Most of the park, outside developed areas, would be managed to protect wilderness values and opportunities for wilderness experiences.

- Nondeveloped areas would continue to be managed as wilderness.
- More than 50% of the park would continue to be managed as designated wilderness.
- New lands acquired on the west side would be assessed for wilderness suitability, and recommendations would be made for a wilderness study.

Most cultural sites in wilderness areas would be managed as discovery sites.

- Most remnants of historic ranching activities (cultural/discovery sites) would be stabilized for visitor safety.

Park Facilities Desired Future Conditions

Park visitor and operations buildings would remain in the existing locations and configurations.

- Any improvements at the Pratt Lodge designed to provide water and sewer services to visitors would conform to the existing footprint.

ALTERNATIVE B

Concept

This alternative would place a major emphasis on promoting wilderness values and the restoration of natural ecosystem processes. There would be greater opportunities than currently exist for visitors to experience natural (untrammelled) and wild conditions in unimproved and challenging settings. Park wilderness areas would be expanded, and visitor experiences would be “wilderness on its terms.” Visitors who do not access the wilderness directly would gain an understanding of wilderness values indirectly through enhanced interpretive presentations in park visitor centers and related areas. Visitors would have greater day use opportunities with improved and more concentrated facilities, greater accessibility, and enhanced exhibits than currently exist. Actively managed visitor use levels in wilderness areas of the park would result in reduced resource impacts and enhanced natural ecosystem processes. Cultural resources, including historic structures, would be preserved and protected from impacts, sometimes limiting visitor use.

Natural Resource Desired Future Conditions

Natural resource management would emphasize restoration and preservation of impacted landscapes.

- Part of the Salt Basin Dunes would be designated a research natural area, where no human-caused impacts would occur.
- Horse use would be prohibited in wilderness to minimize impacts.
- The Pine Springs campground and RV site would be removed to restore the oak woodland.

Plant and animal species and communities would be protected from impacts of exotic species by strict control measures.

- Horse use would be prohibited in wilderness to prevent the spread of exotic species.

All wetland and aquatic environments would be more aggressively protected as natural ecosystems.

- Manzanita Spring would be restored, allowed to naturally fill with sediment, and return to a natural wetland.

Cultural Resource Desired Future Conditions

Cultural resource management would emphasize preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration.

- The Williams Ranch landscape would be restored and the ranch house stabilized. No visitor access would be provided inside the ranch house.

National register historic structures and landscapes would be rehabilitated and/or restored while providing minimum access required for visitor understanding.

- The Frijole ranch house and cultural landscape would be preserved and interpreted as a period ranch.

Visitor Understanding and Experience Desired Future Conditions

Under this alternative visitor understanding would be focused on greater opportunities to develop a deeper understanding of the park's major themes through park exhibits at the Pine Springs visitor center. The visitor center would be expanded, and additional exhibits would be installed to provide visitors with more depth and breadth of understanding into the ecosystem relationships found within the park. In addition, cultural exhibits would be included at the visitor center so that both natural and cultural/historical themes could be integrated or related and a more comprehensive whole would be presented. The cultural exhibits would be removed from the Frijole Ranch. Frijole Ranch would be at least partially restored to its condition as a working ranch. The garden and orchard would be restored and managed to provide visitors with opportunities to understand the workings and values of a turn-of-the-century west Texas ranch. Because the campground at Pine Springs would be removed, visitors would not have the opportunity to camp at Pine Springs and would not have as great an opportunity to understand the values and threats to the night sky resource. The trail and backcountry camping system would remain as it currently is and would not change the number of visitors able to gain an understanding of wilderness values.

- Visitors would get an improved introduction to the park in enhanced visitor facilities at Pine Springs.

Education, interpretation, and orientation opportunities would be concentrated in accessible and enhanced visitor facilities.

- The cultural history exhibits would be redesigned and moved to the Pine Springs visitor center where they would be more accessible.

Programs and media would be available at centralized information centers using new audiovisual technology to present park themes, information, and values with minimum staff.

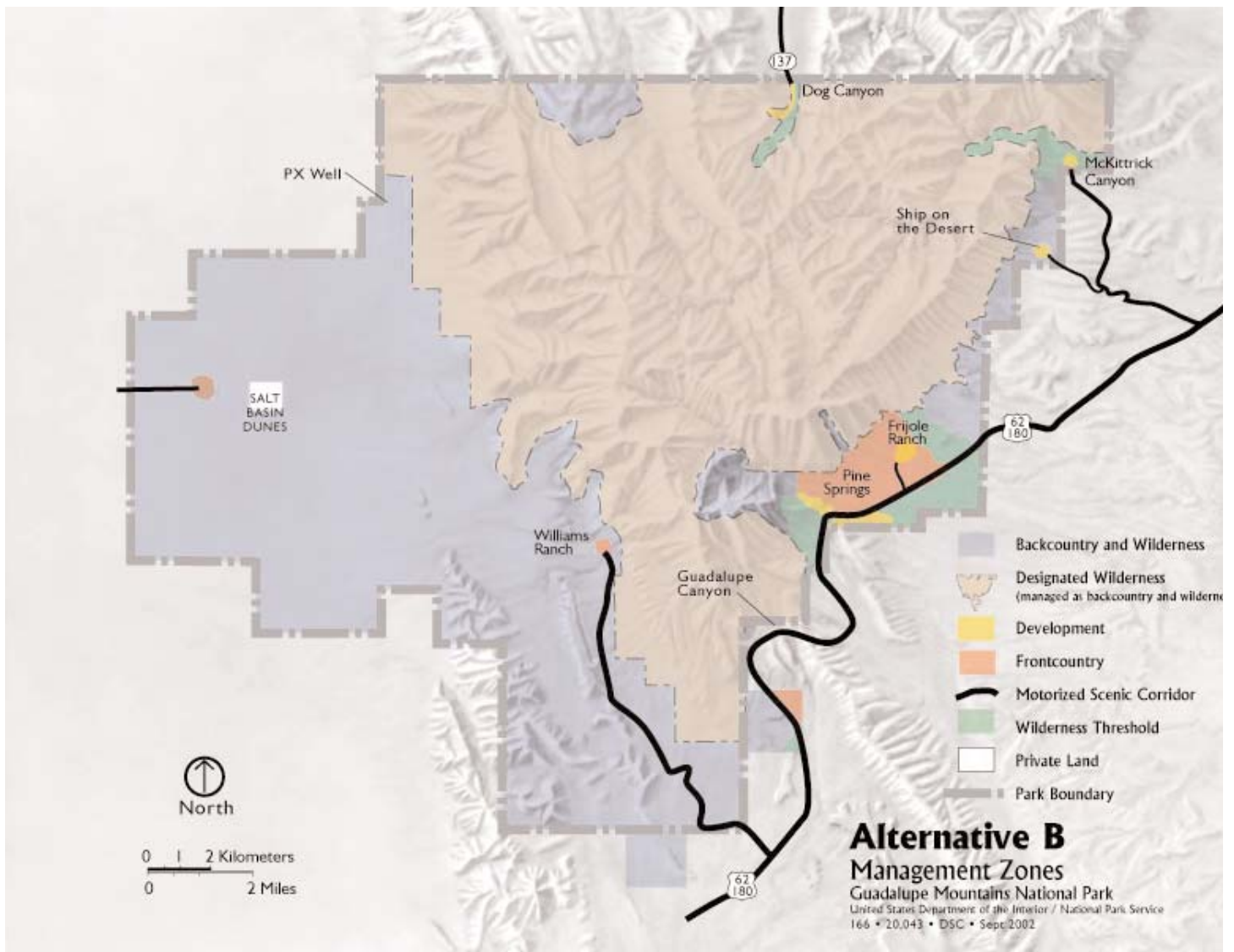
- Visitor centers and contact stations at McKittrick Canyon and Dell City would have updated exhibits, information technology, and audiovisual systems to maximize visitor experience and minimize staffing requirements.

No new park roads would be built, expanded, or improved outside existing centralized visitor areas.

- The Williams Ranch road would remain a high-clearance 4WD road that is accessible by permit only.
- No new wilderness trails would be built; existing trails would remain narrow and primitive in character.
- Visitor use levels would be managed in the wilderness with a permit system so that primitive conditions could be maintained.

No new trailheads would be developed to provide access to wilderness (except at the Salt Basin Dunes).

- Existing trailheads would be maintained as they currently are.



- A new trailhead would be built to a portion of the Salt Basin Dunes.

Pine Springs would continue as a primary day use destination point.

- The picnic area at Pine Springs trailhead would be expanded within the previously disturbed RV parking area.
- Overnight camping would be removed and relocated to another nearby location in or near the park.

Frijole Ranch and McKittrick Canyon would be day use visitor destinations.

- A new parking lot with picnic area (to replace informal picnicking on ranch house lawn) would be developed adjacent to Frijole Ranch but outside the cultural landscape area.

Dog Canyon would be a visitor destination for day use and overnight camping.

- Camping and hiking facilities would be maintained and improved; the public horse corral would be removed.

Wilderness would be expanded to the maximum extent on the west side of the park, with the exception of mini-

mal improvements to access the Salt Basin Dunes as a day use destination. Additionally, areas such as the Guadalupe Peak Trail and Bear Canyon, as well as the Patterson Hills, would be considered for inclusion in the park's wilderness.

- Access to a portion of the Salt Basin Dunes would be from the western park boundary, or by permit only on a primitive access road to a small interior parking area.

Historic remnants in wilderness areas would be removed when possible, and the areas would be restored to natural conditions.

- Old water storage tanks, pipelines, and roads in wilderness would be removed, and native vegetation would be restored when possible.

Park Facilities Desired Future Conditions

Existing facilities would be rehabilitated and remodeled to address new visitor and operational needs.

- Pine Springs visitor center would be remodeled to accommodate new visitor needs; operational needs would be addressed in existing structures in the operations area south of the highway.

ALTERNATIVE C

Concept

This alternative would expand opportunities for visitors to enjoy easier access to a range of park settings than currently exist. New park access and facility improvements would be more dispersed and would provide opportunities for a less challenging wilderness experience for more diverse visitor populations. As in alternative B, promoting wilderness values would also be a major emphasis. Easier access to a range of settings would allow visitors to experience aspects of wilderness on their own terms coupled with a wider range of overnight and multiple day destination opportunities. Wilderness experiences would still be available in the park's interior, however, the interior wilderness would be bordered by developed areas and more staging areas along some edges of the park. More dispersed visitor use outside of development centers of the park would require more aggressive resource impact mitigation to maintain natural ecosystem processes. Cultural resources, including historic structures, would be preserved and protected from impacts while accommodating visitor use.

Natural Resource Desired Future Conditions

Natural resource mitigation measures associated with more widespread visitor access would be evident.

- Wilderness tent sites would be delineated as at present, and primitive sanitary facilities might be provided.

Plant and animal species and communities would be protected from impacts of exotic species by mitigation measures.

- Horse use in the wilderness and some overnight horse use would be allowed; more aggressive monitoring and control of exotic species would be implemented.

Wetland environments and water quality would be protected by mitigating the impacts of use at developed sites.

- Trail improvements or boardwalks would be provided to protect the fragile wetland soils and vegetation.

Cultural Resource Desired Future Conditions

Cultural resource management would emphasize preservation opportunities that are compatible with visitor use.

- Comprehensive monitoring of archeological, ethnographic, and historic sites would occur.
- Educational programs would be developed to promote greater visitor understanding of the park's cultural resources.

Historic structures eligible for the National Register and associated landscapes would be rehabilitated and adaptively reused.

- Pratt Lodge would be rehabilitated and adaptively reused for administrative overnight accommodations to support programs for visitor education and interpretation.

Visitor Understanding and Experience Desired Future Conditions

Under this alternative the major visitor facilities would remain as they currently are, with perhaps some minor modifications. Visitor understanding would be focused on the opportunity to gain an orientation and basic understanding of the natural and cultural themes as they do now at the Pine Springs visitor center and Frijole Ranch. A greater diversity of visitors would have an opportunity to understand the values and character of wilderness because of an expansion of frontcountry trails and additional decentralized access facilities such as the entrance and staging areas on the west side. More visitors would be able to develop an understanding and experience of intense isolation due to the improved ease of access to some currently more remote areas of the park. A wider diversity of visitor would also be accommodated in the campgrounds in the park. Opportunities for increased understanding of the value of clear night skies would exist. More visitors would also come into contact with old and abandoned farm and ranch ruins and have an opportunity to explore and understand the nature of ranching in a severe environment. Less emphasis would be placed on exhibits, and there would be only the current opportunity to understand the major interpretive themes in the park.

- Improvements would include more widely dispersed interpretive waysides and programs that emphasize the ecological importance of wilderness.

Some park roads would be added or improved to provide vehicular and visitor access to a variety of day use and overnight camping opportunities.

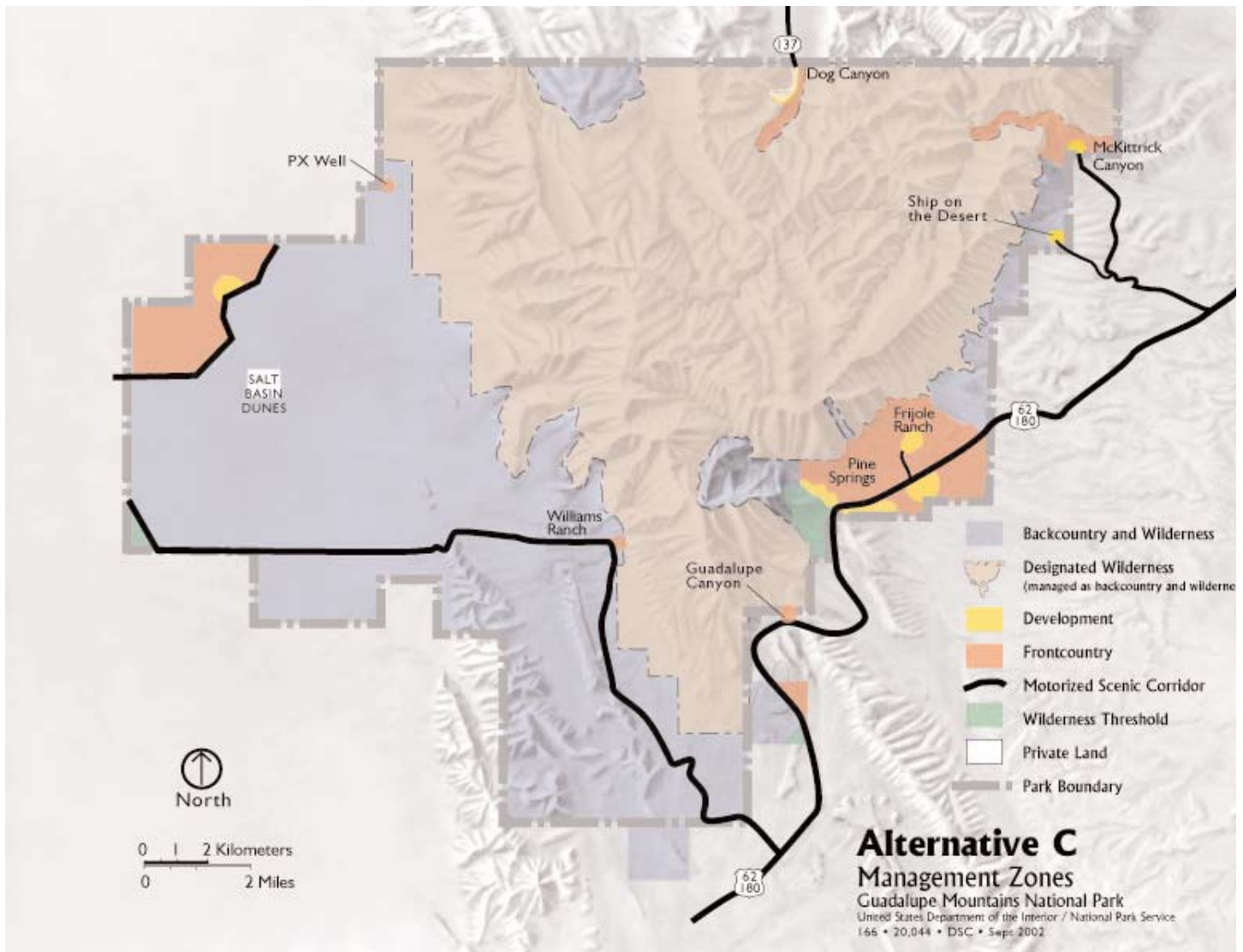
- Williams Ranch road would be improved for all-vehicle use, an old road trace would be extended from Williams Ranch road to connect with Dell City, and improved vehicular access would be provided to the Salt Basin Dunes and PX Well.

Hiking trails in the frontcountry would be added or modified to provide a wider variety of more accessible walking/hiking trails to more diverse destinations.

- Some additional hiking and horseback riding trails on old roads or abandoned trails would be added; additional trails would also be developed for use by the physically challenged.

New trailheads would provide for enhanced access to the trail system and to dispersed park destinations.

- New trailheads would be developed at Williams Ranch, Guadalupe Canyon, and PX Well; Williams Ranch would be established as an overnight trailhead.



Developed camping experiences would be provided in the park.

- A new campground, with separate RV, tent, and group camping and picnic areas, would be developed on the in the park south of the highway and east of the park housing area.

Pine Springs, Frijole Ranch, and Dog Canyon would become visitor gateway trailheads for expanded dispersed day use and overnight camping visitors.

- The Frijole ranch house and landscape would be reestablished as a working ranch, and a new parking lot with a picnic area would be developed adjacent to Frijole Ranch (but outside the cultural landscape area as in alternative B).

The McKittrick Canyon trail would be improved as a visitor gateway access to a wider variety and density of day use experience opportunities.

- The Pratt Lodge structure and landscape would be restored; utilities would be replaced to provide expanded visitor programs.

The west side of the park would be improved as visitor destinations for day use and overnight camping.

- Improvements at the Salt Basin Dunes would include a contact station, campground, parking area, viewpoint, and trailhead for providing access to the Salt Basin Dunes.
- Williams Ranch Road would be improved for use by most two-wheel-drive and low-clearance vehicles.

Historic remnants in wilderness areas would be retained as discovery sites.

- The Bowl Cabin would be stabilized and preserved as a discovery site.

Park Facilities Desired Future Conditions

Existing facilities would be rehabilitated, reused, and expanded to support park operations.

- Pack animal operation would be relocated to park maintenance area.
- Options would be considered for a visitor horse riding concession.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Guadalupe Mountains National Park
HC 60, Box 400
Salt Flat, Texas 79847-9400

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300



FIRST-CLASS MAIL
POSTAGE & FEES PAID
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
PERMIT NO. G-83



GUADALUPE MOUNTAINS
NATIONAL PARK